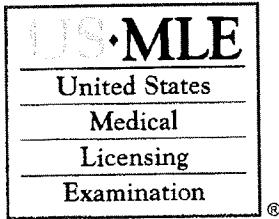


EXHIBIT 1A



**Via Email and Fed Ex
Personal and Confidential**

Secretariat:
3750 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104
(215) 590-9500
Fax: (215) 590-9470
www.usmle.org

February 23, 2012

Maria Mahmood
14717 Exbury Ln
Laurel, MD 20707

USMLE ID#: 5-166-839-0

Dear Ms. Mahmood:

I am writing to inform you that the USMLE Committee for Individualized Review has completed its review of all of the available information related to your alleged irregular behavior.

In advance of the review, the Committee members were provided with copies of the following materials: (a) my letter to you dated August 24, 2011; (b) your response to my letter, dated October 10, 2011; (c) email communications between NBME staff and Prometric staff, dated August 8 through August 18; (d) a report, written by Prometric, outlining the events that occurred at the Baltimore, MD Prometric Center on August 8, 2011; (e) a copy of the Baltimore Police Department's report, dated August 10, 2011; (f) case information from the Circuit Court for Baltimore City Criminal System; and (g) your letter to the Committee, dated January 22, 2012 and attachments.

In its deliberations, the Committee reviewed the foregoing information and noted the following:

- A report was received from Prometric that you were observed attempting to light a fire in the bathroom of the testing center.
- In your written statement to the Committee you provided information and documentation about matters personal to you that you believe affected your judgment. In addition to personal medical issues, you site familial and monetary pressures to succeed, pressure due to an approaching deadline imposed by your medical school, and the anxiety and panic you experienced leading up to and on your exam day. You stated you felt the only way to get a respite was to "create a diversion that would delay" your exam.

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Federation of State Medical Boards of the U.S., Inc.
400 Fuller Wiser Road, Suite 300
Euless, TX 76039
(817) 868-4000
Fax: (817) 868-4097
www.fsmb.org



National Board of Medical Examiners
3750 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104
(215) 590-9500
Fax: (215) 590-9555
www.nbme.org

Maria Mahmood
February 23, 2012
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Following careful consideration of all of the information available, the Committee for Individualized Review determined that you engaged in irregular behavior. In reaching this decision, the Committee made the following findings:

- In connection with your application for Steps 1, 2 CK and 2 CS, you certified that you read and were familiar with the contents of the USMLE *Bulletin of Information* and agreed to abide by the policies and procedures described therein.
- Examinees are advised in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information* that disruptive or unprofessional behavior at a test center constitutes irregular behavior.

In accordance with “*USMLE Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior*,” a copy of which was included with my August 24, 2011 letter to you, your USMLE record will include an annotation showing that the Committee for Individualized Review determined that you engaged in irregular behavior. Therefore, any USMLE transcripts sent to you or any third party will include this annotation. When you submit requests for USMLE transcripts to be sent to third parties, the transcripts will be accompanied by information regarding the decision of the Committee for Individualized Review. Such information would be based on the content of this letter and the documents referenced in it.

Further, the Committee for Individualized Review determined that information regarding its decision will be reported to the Board Action Data Bank of the Federation of State Medical Boards.

As explained in paragraph B.8 of the Policies and Procedures, in the event of irregular behavior that is egregious and/or deemed to threaten the integrity of the examination system, the Committee for Individualized Review may recommend to the USMLE Composite Committee that the examinee be barred from future examinations. The Committee found such conditions applicable in this instance and will recommend to the Composite Committee that you be barred for three years from the date of this letter (i.e. until February 23, 2015) from registering for or taking future administrations of USMLE for which you are otherwise eligible. Periods when you may be ineligible for other reasons to register or sit for USMLE will not count toward this three-year bar. This recommendation will be reviewed by the USMLE Composite Committee at its June 2012 meeting.

As explained in paragraph B.11 of the above-referenced Procedures, you have the right to appeal this decision of the Committee for Individualized Review to the USMLE Composite Committee by sending a request for appeal within 90 days of the date of this letter, if you have a reasonable basis to believe that the Committee did not act in compliance with applicable USMLE policies and/or procedures or that the decision of the Committee was clearly contrary to the weight of the evidence before it.

If you have any questions regarding the foregoing information, please do not hesitate to contact me at USMLESec@nbme.org.

Maria Mahmood
February 23, 2012
Page 3 of 3

Sincerely,



Amy Buono
Office of the USMLE Secretariat

C: NBME
Loreen Troy, University of Illinois College of Medicine